

WE CLAIM:

1. A method for winding a material onto a spool, comprising:
providing a quantity of material;
selecting a value of at least one parameter associated with said material;
5 conditioning said material based at least in part on said at least one value;
selecting a spool having a first configuration based at least in part on said
at least one value; and
winding said material onto said spool.
2. The method of Claim 1, wherein said material comprises decorative
10 ribbon, the act of selecting at least one value comprises selecting the curl radius of said
ribbon, and the act of selecting a spool having a first configuration comprises selecting a
spool having a radius substantially similar to said value.
3. The method of Claim 2, wherein the act of conditioning comprises
imparting a curl to said ribbon having substantially the same radius as that of said value.
- 15 4. The method of Claim 3, wherein the act of imparting a curl comprises
running said ribbon through a conditioning device at a speed greater than a
predetermined minimum speed necessary to impart such curl.
5. The method of Claim 4, wherein said act of imparting a curl further
comprises heating at least a portion of said conditioning device to aid in curling of said
20 ribbon.
6. The method of Claim 4, wherein said act of imparting a curl further
comprises adjusting the tension on said ribbon with respect to said conditioning device.
7. The method of Claim 1, wherein the act of winding comprises winding
said material onto said spool in a helical, back-and-forth lay pattern.
- 25 8. The method of Claim 7, further comprising heating said spool after said
material is wound thereon, thereby at least in part preserving said selected value of said
parameter.
9. A method for providing at least two different materials disposed on a
single spool, said at least two different materials being curled, the method comprising:
30 providing a quantity of at least a first material;

providing a quantity of at least a second material;
selecting the desired curl radius associated with said first and second materials;
conditioning said first and second materials based at least in part on said
5 selected curl radius;
selecting a spool having a longitudinal axis and a radius, said radius being substantially similar to said selected curl radius; and
winding said first and second materials onto said spool in respective first and second lay patterns which are substantially helical.

10 10. The method of claim 9, wherein said first substantially helical lay pattern is translated along said longitudinal axis with respect to said second substantially helical lay pattern such that individual turns of said first and second materials are substantially juxtaposed.

15 11. The method of Claim 9, wherein said first and second lay patterns are substantially overlapping.

12. An apparatus for winding spooled materials, comprising:
at least one supply spool adapted to supply a quantity of unconditioned material;
at least one conditioning device, said at least one device adapted to
20 receive said unconditioned material and alter at least one physical property of said material in order to produce conditioned material;
at least one receiving spool, said at least one receiving spool being adapted to store said conditioned material thereon; and
a positioning device, adapted to position said at least one conditioning
25 device with respect to respective ones of said at least one receiving spool, such that said conditioned material is disposed on said at least one receiving spool in a predetermined pattern.

30 13. The apparatus of Claim 12, wherein said unconditioned material comprises uncurled ribbon, and said at least one property comprises the curl of said ribbon.

14. The apparatus of Claim 13, wherein said at least one conditioning device comprises a curling blade having a curling edge associated therewith.

5 15. The apparatus of Claim 12, wherein said at least one receiving spool comprises a spool having a radius substantially similar to the average radius of curl of said ribbon.

16. The apparatus of Claim 15, wherein said at least one receiving spool is heated to a temperature above ambient in order to assist in maintaining the curl of said ribbon.

10 17. The apparatus of Claim 15, wherein said at least one receiving spool further comprises an indicator for visually indicating the amount of ribbon remaining on said at least one spool.

18. The apparatus of Claim 12, wherein said positioning device is adapted to substantially traverse the width of said at least one spool so as to dispose said conditioned material thereon in a substantially helical lay pattern.

15 19. The apparatus of Claim 18, wherein said positioning device is further adapted to alternate in substantially sinusoidal fashion between the two ends of said at least one receiving spool so as to form a back-and-forth helical lay pattern with said material.

20 20. The apparatus of Claim 15, further comprising a tensioning apparatus adapted to maintain said ribbon within a range of tension during curling.

21. A spool of conditioned and wound material, comprising:
a substantially elongate, substantially cylindrical core;
a quantity of conditioned material disposed on said core;
25 wherein at least one parameter of said core is selected so as to preserve said material in a conditioned state.

22. The spool of Claim 21, wherein said wound material is ribbon, said conditioned state comprises said material having a curl of predetermined average radius, and said at least one parameter comprises the radius of said core.

23. The spool of Claim 22, wherein said curled ribbon is disposed on said core in a substantially helical pattern.

24. The spool of Claim 23, wherein said curled ribbon is further disposed on said core such that said helical pattern alternates in a back-and-forth pattern across substantially the length of said core.

25. The spool of Claim 23, further comprising a bore disposed within said core, said bore facilitating winding of said conditioned material onto said spool.

26. The spool of Claim 22, wherein said material comprises at least first and second types of material, said first type of material being wound in alternating helical lay pattern substantially atop said second type of material.

27. The spool of Claim 22, wherein said material comprises at least first and second types of material, said first type of material being wound in alternating helical lay pattern substantially juxtaposed with said second type of material.

28. A dispenser for spooled materials, comprising:
a housing element having a recess formed therein;
a plurality of spools of conditioned material disposed substantially within said recess of said housing element; and
a plurality of apertures disposed in proximity to respective ones of said spools, said apertures being adapted to pass said conditioned material from said respective ones of said spools therethrough.

29. The dispenser of Claim 28, wherein said conditioned material comprises quantities of curled ribbon each having a plurality of individual turns, said quantities of curled ribbon being disposed on respective ones of said spools in a helical lay pattern, the radius of said spools further being selected so as to be substantially similar to that of said turns of said curled ribbon.

30. The dispenser of Claim 29, further comprising a plurality of spindle elements, said spindle elements facilitating rotation of respective ones of said spools around respective rotational axes such that each of said spools may

rotate within said dispenser without interference from other ones of said spools disposed therein.

31. The dispenser of Claim 30, wherein said apertures are substantially elongate and co-extensive with said spools.